

VZCZCXYZ0000
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHWN #0123/01 0581835
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 271835Z FEB 08
FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6144
INFO RUCNCOM/EC CARICOM COLLECTIVE
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1875
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA 0106
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J5 MIAMI FL
RUEHCV/USDAO CARACAS VE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRIDGETOWN 000123

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
DEPT FOR WHA/CAR-FORTIN
DEPT FOR OES-BLANCAS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/26/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KTIA](#) [ETRD](#) [PBTS](#) [XL](#)
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED KOSOVO, ARTICLE 98, CUBA, AND
JUNE DELIVERABLES IN ST. LUCIA

REF: 07 BRIDGETOWN 1440

Classified By: PolOff Tyler Allen for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: In a February 21 meeting with the Ambassador, St. Lucian PM King reemphasized his support for Kosovo independence and Article 98, although the GOSL has yet to act on either issue. In discussing the deliverables from the June 2007 Conference on the Caribbean, King's advisor explained that the Science and Technology agreement is more important to St. Lucians than the Trade and Investment Agreement, hinting that it will be difficult to move the TIFA without movement on the S&T agreement. END SUMMARY.

Kosovo

12. (C) The Ambassador met PM King February 21 in conjunction with a visit to the island to mark St. Lucia's independence day. She took the opportunity to follow up on her request for St. Lucia's recognition of Kosovo as an independent country. PM King stated that the GOSL is behind Kosovo's independence and will make a statement at the appropriate moment.

Article 98

13. (C) PM King ensured the Ambassador that Article 98 would be on cabinet's agenda that day. However, the Ambassador and PolOff learned later that "an administrative glitch" kept Article 98 from being discussed as previously promised. Regardless, PM advisor St. Aimee has assured PolOff that it is already on the agenda for the February 28 cabinet meeting. Likewise, a number of pro-U.S. cabinet members are aware that Article 98 will be on the agenda soon and have promised their support for it.

Transition in Cuba

14. (C) PM King shared his thoughts on the transition in power in Cuba. He stated that, although unlikely, he hopes the system will fail, allowing democracy to emerge. Supporting this, King mentioned that Raul is not as strong a leader as his brother. He also shared his concern that successful transition in Cuba could mean increased economic competition against the Eastern Caribbean, particularly for tourism

dollars. St. Aimee opined that CARICOM will have to engage Cuba to help make Cuba's tourism sector complementary to the rest of the Caribbean's rather than competitive.

TIFA vs S&T

15. (C) The Ambassador urged PM King to show leadership within CARICOM to help push along the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) Washington submitted to CARICOM prior to the June Conference. Although King agreed, St. Aimee stressed that a TIFA helps St. Lucia little without the promised Science and Technology Agreement CARICOM is awaiting from Washington. According to St. Aimee, St. Lucia plans to use science and technology to process its agricultural products, filling a niche demand for agro-processed goods (Note: This is consistent with previous conversations with Trade Minister Guy Meyers (reftel). End Note.) St. Aimee also emphasized that, as St. Lucia develops its spa resort sector, it also would like to develop its alternative medicine industry, another potential beneficiary of an S&T agreement. King mentioned that the new St. Lucian Ambassador to the United States will be focusing on bilateral education opportunities, particularly in the field of science and technology.

COMMENT

16. (C) This friendly and positive meeting was constructive for U.S.-St. Lucian relations. King and St. Aimee have all but committed St. Lucia to the Article 98 agreement, which appears to have been slowed by cabinet meetings dominated by party wrangling rather than due to strident opposition to the

agreement itself. Also, this meeting allowed St. Lucia to

express its request for progress on the S&T agreement while the Ambassador pushed the TIFA agenda. It appears movement on the S&T could provide dividends on the TIFA, at least as far as St. Lucia is concerned.

OURISMAN